"Unlike any other book."
—The Onion A.V. Club

X-MEN® LEGACY:

LEGION

PRODIGAL

SPURRIER

MARVEL NOW!

HUAT • MOLINA

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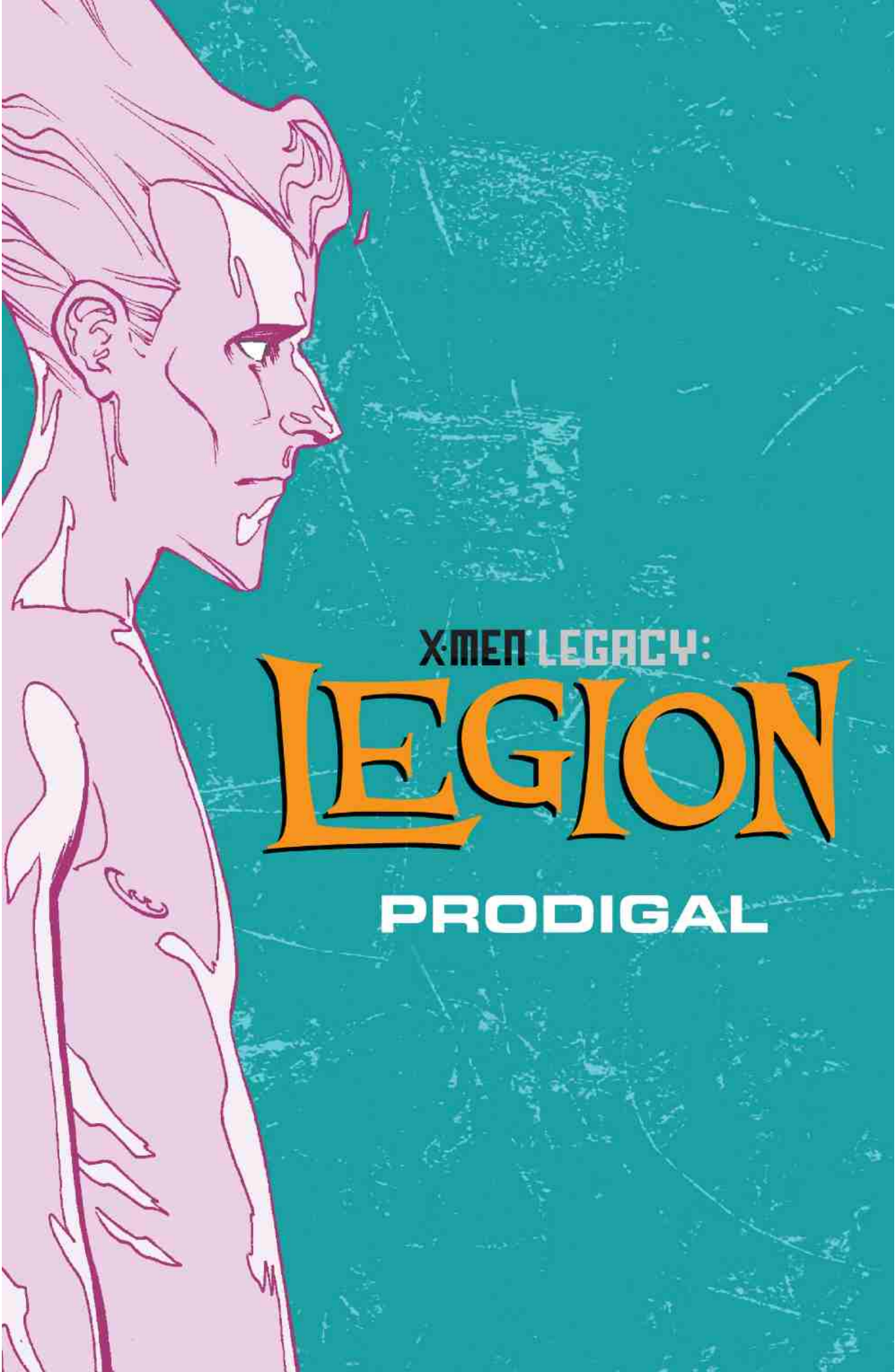
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PRODIGAL

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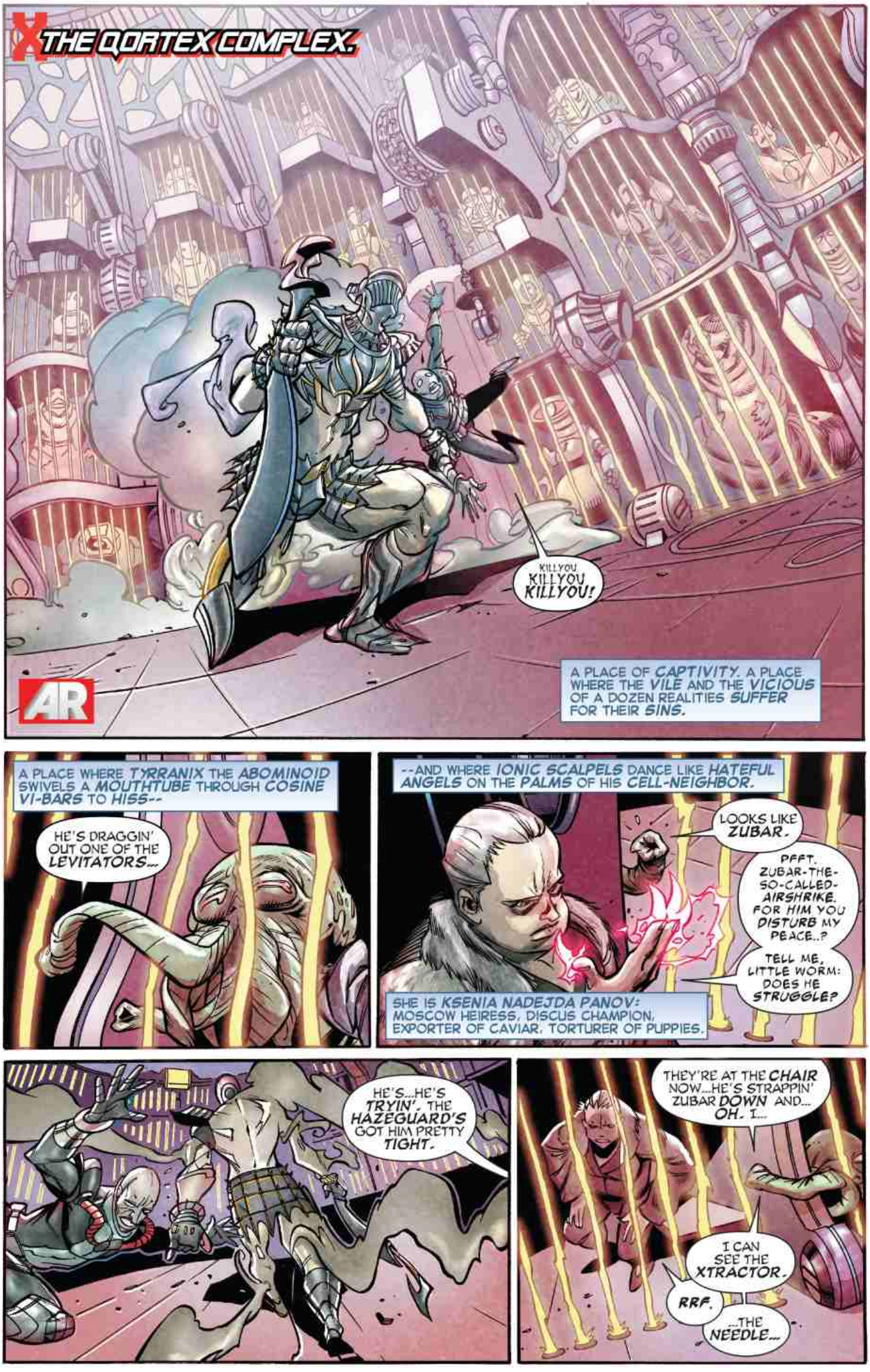
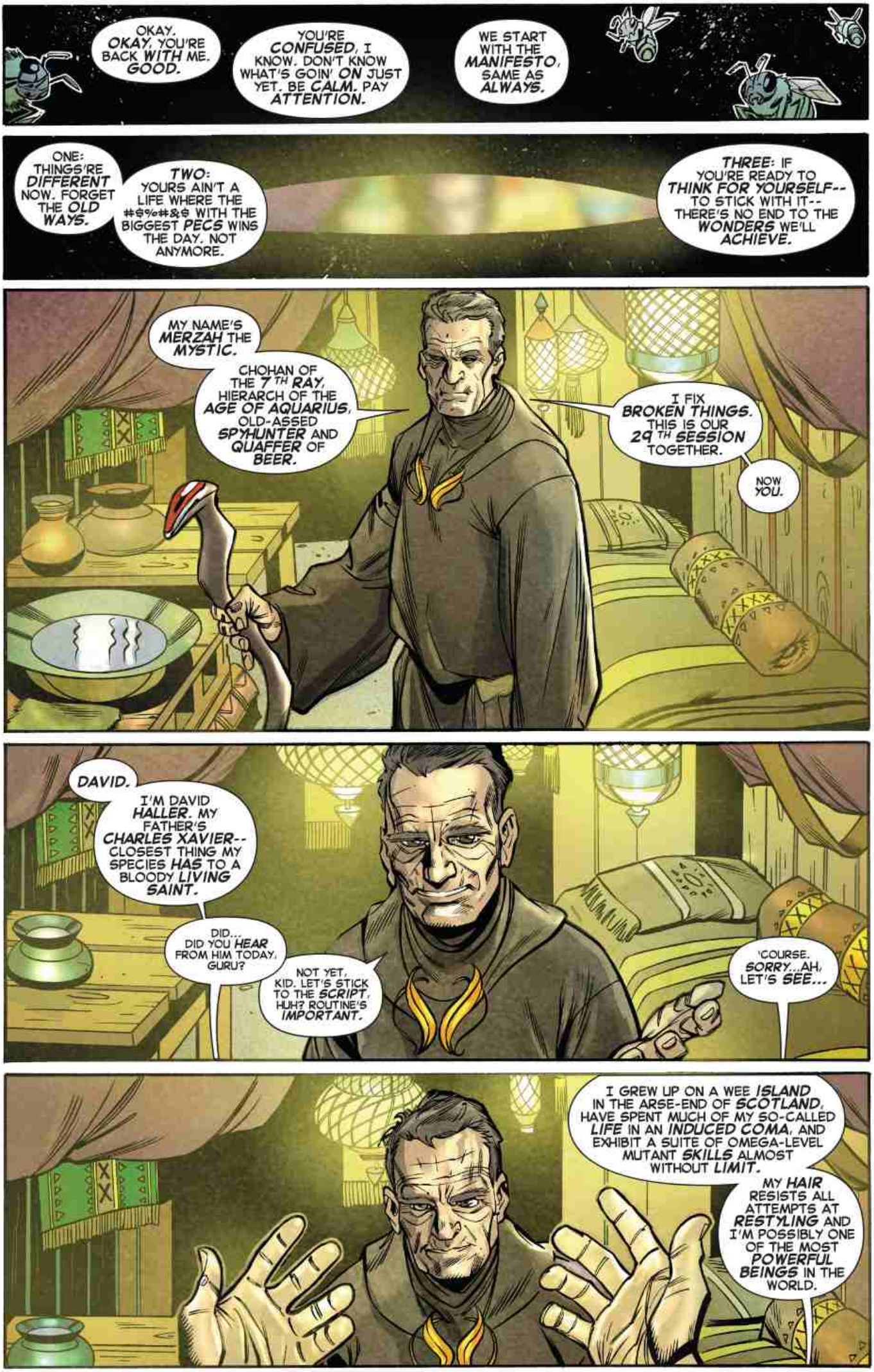
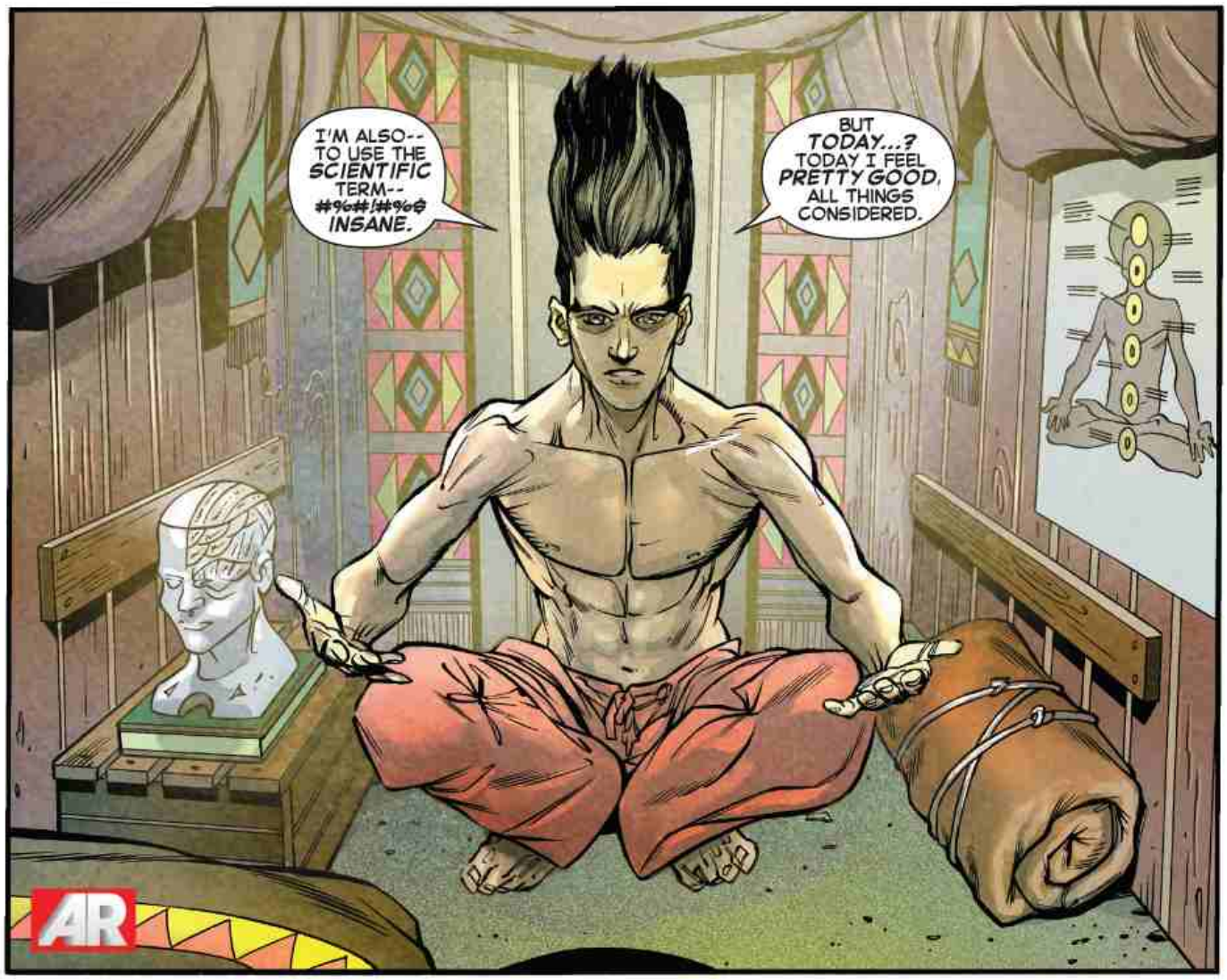

THE QORTEX COMPLEX.
KILLYOU KILLYOU KILLYOU!
A PLACE OF CAPTIVITY. A PLACE WHERE THE VILE AND THE VICIOUS OF A DOZEN REALITIES SUFFER FOR THEIR SINS.
AR
A PLACE WHERE TYRRANIX THE ABOMINOID SWIVELS A MOUTHTUBE THROUGH COSINE VI-BARS TO HISS--
HE'S DRAGGIN' OUT ONE OF THE LEVITATORS...
--AND WHERE IONIC SCALPELS DANCE LIKE HATEFUL ANGELS ON THE PALMS OF HIS CELL-NEIGHBOR.
LOOKS LIKE ZUBAR.
PFFT. ZUBAR-THE-SO-CALLED-AIRSHRIKE. FOR HIM YOU DISTURB MY PEACE..?
TELL ME, LITTLE WORM: DOES HE STRUGGLE?
SHE IS KSENIA NADEJDA PANOV: MOSCOW HEIRESS, DISCUS CHAMPION, EXPORTER OF CAVIAR, TORTURER OF PUPPIES.
HE'S...HE'S TRYIN'. THE HAZEGUARD'S GOT HIM PRETTY TIGHT.
THEY'RE AT THE CHAIR NOW...HE'S STRAPPIN' ZUBAR DOWN AND... OH. I...
I CAN SEE THE XTRACTOR.
RRF.
...THE NEEDLE...

THE XTRACTOR.
AAAAAAAAA
THE TRUTH IS, NONE OF THEM KNOWS WHAT IT IS. WHY IT DRAGS THEM OUT DAY AFTER DAY; WHAT SICKLY ESSENCE IT DRAINS.
THEY CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER HOW THEY CAME TO BE HERE, NOR GUESS WHEN--IF EVER--THEY'LL SEE RELEASE.
THEY...THEY SAY IT SUCKS OUT THE BADNESS. LIKE--PURE EVIL.
MAYBE. THERE IS PLENTY TO BE FOUND IN THIS PLACE. THOUGH PRECIOUS LITTLE ATTENTION TO DETAIL.
LOOK, WORM. LOOK CLOSE.
"YOU SEE HOW THE XTRACTOR IS FRAIL, DA? BENEATH THE ARMOR.
"HOW HE RELIES ON THE HAZEGUARD TO SUBDUE US?
"ONLY WHEN THE PRISONERS ARE EMPTIED--EXHAUSTED--DOES HE DARE HANDLE THEM HIMSELF.
"THAT, MY NOISY LITTLE WORM... THAT IS THE WEAK MOMENT..."
...THAT IS THE MOMENT I AWAIT.
YOU WILL NOT DISTURB ME AGAIN.
MWWAAAAA!


OKAY. OKAY, YOU'RE BACK WITH ME. GOOD.
YOU'RE CONFUSED, I KNOW. DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON JUST YET. BE CALM. PAY ATTENTION.
WE START WITH THE MANIFESTO, SAME AS ALWAYS.
ONE: THINGS'RE DIFFERENT NOW. FORGET THE OLD WAYS.
TWO: YOURS AIN'T A LIFE WHERE THE #$%#&$ WITH THE BIGGEST PECS WINS THE DAY. NOT ANYMORE.
THREE: IF YOU'RE READY TO THINK FOR YOURSELF-- TO STICK WITH IT-- THERE'S NO END TO THE WONDERS WE'LL ACHIEVE.
MY NAME'S MERZAH THE MYSTIC.
CHOHAN OF THE 7TH RAY, HIERARCH OF THE AGE OF AQUARIUS, OLD-ASSED SPYHUNTER AND QUAFFER OF BEER.
I FIX BROKEN THINGS. THIS IS OUR 29TH SESSION TOGETHER.
NOW YOU.
DAVID.
I'M DAVID HALLER. MY FATHER'S CHARLES XAVIER-- CLOSEST THING MY SPECIES HAS TO A BLOODY LIVING SAINT.
DID... DID YOU HEAR FROM HIM TODAY, GURU?
NOT YET, KID. LET'S STICK TO THE SCRIPT, HUH? ROUTINE'S IMPORTANT.
'COURSE. SORRY...AH, LET'S SEE...
I GREW UP ON A WEE ISLAND IN THE ARSE-END OF SCOTLAND, HAVE SPENT MUCH OF MY SO-CALLED LIFE IN AN INDUCED COMA, AND EXHIBIT A SUITE OF OMEGA-LEVEL MUTANT SKILLS ALMOST WITHOUT LIMIT.
MY HAIR RESISTS ALL ATTEMPTS AT RESTYLING AND I'M POSSIBLY ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS IN THE WORLD.


I'M ALSO-- TO USE THE SCIENTIFIC TERM-- #%@#!#%@ INSANE.
BUT TODAY...? TODAY I FEEL PRETTY GOOD, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.
AR

PRODIGAL

THAT'S GOOD, DAVID. THAT'S GOOD.
QUIT IT WITH THE FLOATY, HUH? LET'S TAKE US A WALK.

HUH. STILL GETS ME, Y'KNOW--EVERY TIME I STEP OUT HERE. THIS IS A WEIRD, WEIRD PLACE, GURU.
WELL WHADDAYA EXPECT, KID? --
KANGCHENGYAO, NORTH SIKKIM DISTRICT. HIMALAYAN INDIA.

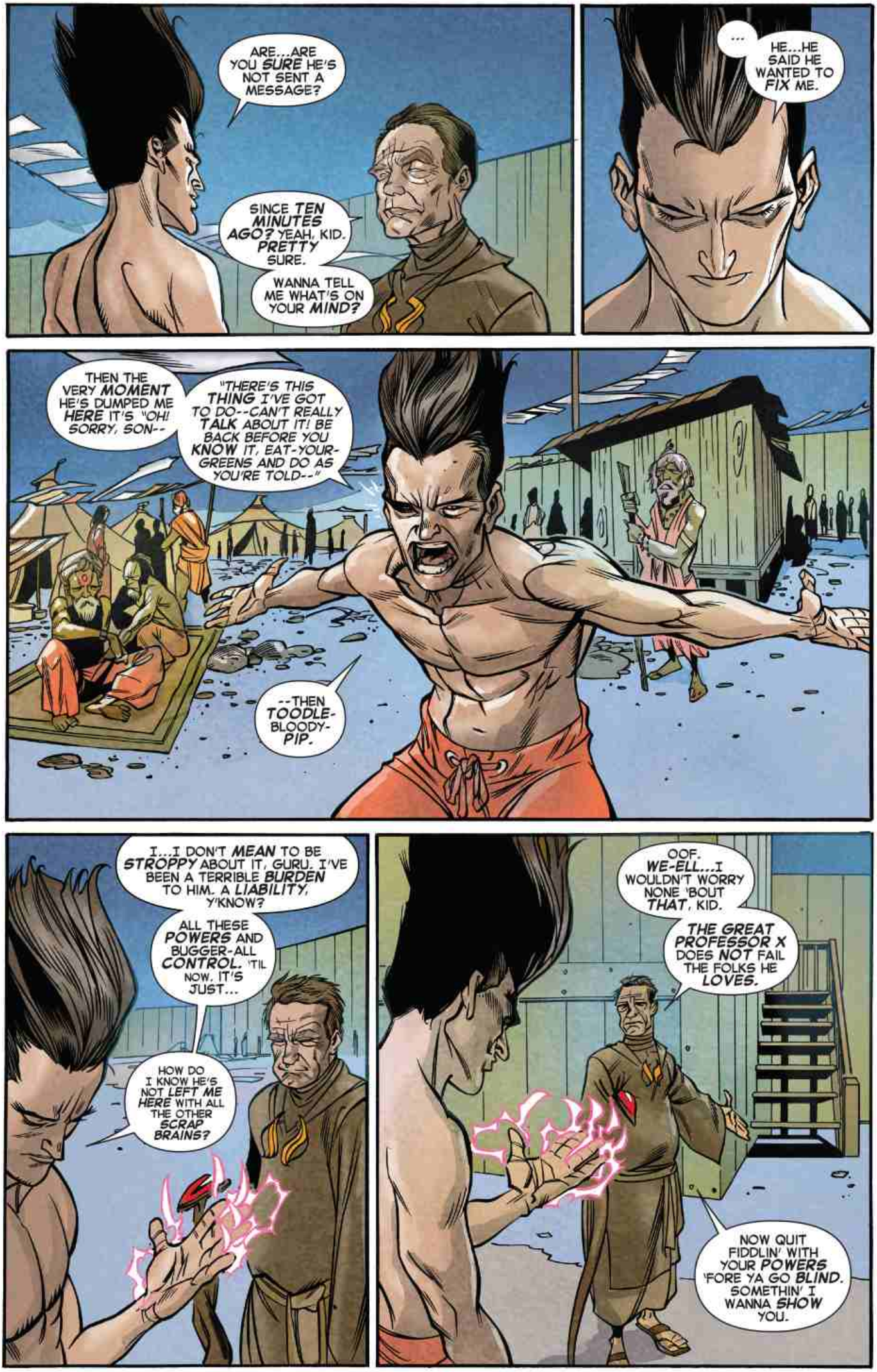
THESE'RE WEIRD FOLK.
YOU GOT ANY IDEA HOW MUCH STRAIN IT PUTS ON A HUMAN BRAIN--A LIFETIME BEIN' A PSYKER?
THE TELECTRICIAN. MASTER MENTAL. THE HUMAN GUESS.
THESE WERE THE BEST, PAL--AND NOW LOOK. OLD, CONFUSED, FRAGILE.
FORGOTTEN.

AW, DON'T BE LIKE THAT. THERE'S STILL GREATNESS HERE--ELSE I WOULDNA BUILT THE COMMUNE AT ALL. US NEURONAUTS DESERVE A DIGNIFIED RETIREMENT, SAME AS ANYONE.
SPEAKINA WHICH...?
AYE, I KNOW...

EVENIN' THERE, MR. ZARDU. BEEN OFF SAVIN' THE WORLD AGAIN, HAVE YOU?
NOG!--IS THAT YOU? I TRIUMPHED OVER THE GROTESQUE BEETLEPEOPLE THIS VERY HOUR! THEIR ANTENNAE SHALL ADORN MY TROPHY HALL!
FETCH ME CHOCOLATE AND DANCING GIRLS!

I'LL DO THAT, SIR--DON'T YOU FRET. TELL YOU WHAT THOUGH: I THINK WE FINALLY GOT THAT PSYCHIC TUMOR OF YOURS ON THE RUN.
WHAT SAY WE TRY SMOKING IT OUT FOR GOOD, EH?

GOT YOUR BACK, KID.
KZZZZKKKKSSSS
AR
DIDJA GET IT?
WOMP RAT FROM A BLOODY T-16.
HE'LL SLEEP FOR A DAY-- BUT AYE, HE'S CLEAR.
HEH. FEELS GOOD, DON'T IT?
WHAT, GURU?
HELPIN', DAVID! HELPIN' PEOPLE. YOU'RE YOUR FATHER'S SON.
...
DAD.


ARE...ARE YOU SURE HE'S NOT SENT A MESSAGE?
SINCE TEN MINUTES AGO? YEAH, KID. PRETTY SURE.
WANNA TELL ME WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
...
HE...HE SAID HE WANTED TO FIX ME.
THEN THE VERY MOMENT HE'S DUMPED ME HERE IT'S "OH! SORRY, SON--
"THERE'S THIS THING I'VE GOT TO DO--CAN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT IT! BE BACK BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, EAT-YOUR-GREENS AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD--"
--THEN TOODLE-BLOODY-PIP.
I...I DON'T MEAN TO BE STROPPY ABOUT IT, GURU. I'VE BEEN A TERRIBLE BURDEN TO HIM. A LIABILITY, Y'KNOW?
ALL THESE POWERS AND BUGGER-ALL CONTROL. 'TIL NOW. IT'S JUST...
HOW DO I KNOW HE'S NOT LEFT ME HERE WITH ALL THE OTHER SCRAP BRAINS?
OOF. WE-ELL...I WOULDN'T WORRY NONE 'BOUT THAT, KID.
THE GREAT PROFESSOR X DOES NOT FAIL THE FOLKS HE LOVES.
NOW QUIT FIDDLIN' WITH YOUR POWERS 'FORE YA GO BLIND. SOMETHIN' I WANNA SHOW YOU.

THE MOMENT HAS ARRIVED.
KSENIA NADEJDA PANOV HAS BEEN DRAGGED FORTH. THE XTRACTOR'S NEEDLES HAVE TAKEN THEIR GRISLY TOLL.
HER POWER DEPLETED. HER STRENGTH DRAINED. HER WILL EXHAUSTED.
UUUUUUUH
(THOUGH NOT QUITE AS EXHAUSTED AS SHE PRETENDS.)
I'VE GOT IT FROM HERE. CHEERS.
AND YES--WONDER OF WONDERS--AS THE GREAT XTRACTOR RETURNS HER TO HELL SHE FEELS IT PAUSE...
...SENSES ITS GRIP SLACKEN, AS IF DISTRACTED BY A THOUGHT.
...AND HEARS ITS VOICE--THICK WITH BITTERNESS--WHISPER:
"THE GREAT PROFESSOR X DOES NOT FAIL THE FOLKS HE LOVES."
HH.
MY ARSE.
THWUK
HA!

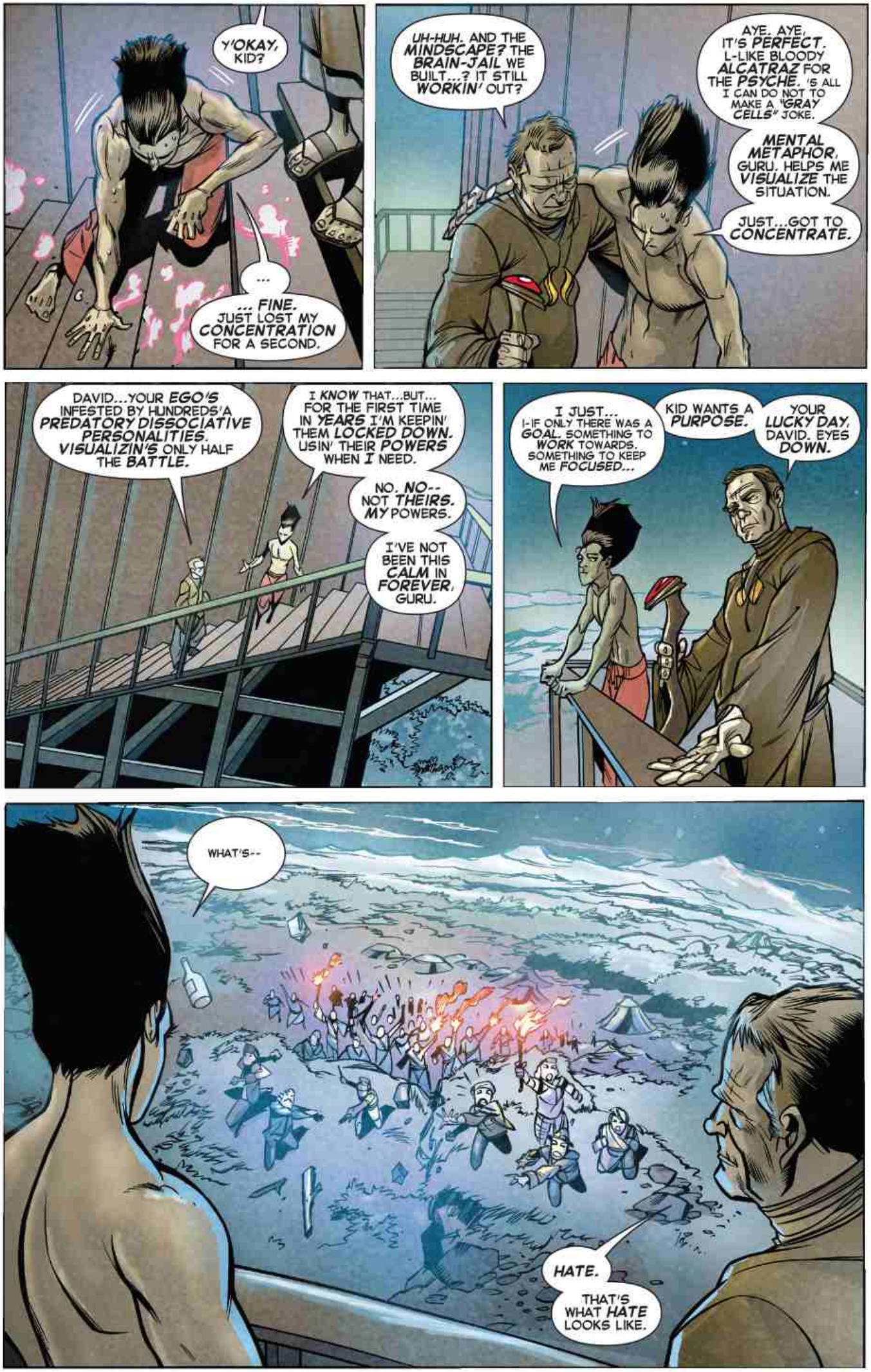
SKRNCH

AT LAST!
MY TIME! MY MOMENT!
AW CRAP.

I AM KSENIA NADEJDA PANOV!
THE WORLD SHALL TREMBLE BEFORE ME!

BAD IDEA.
?

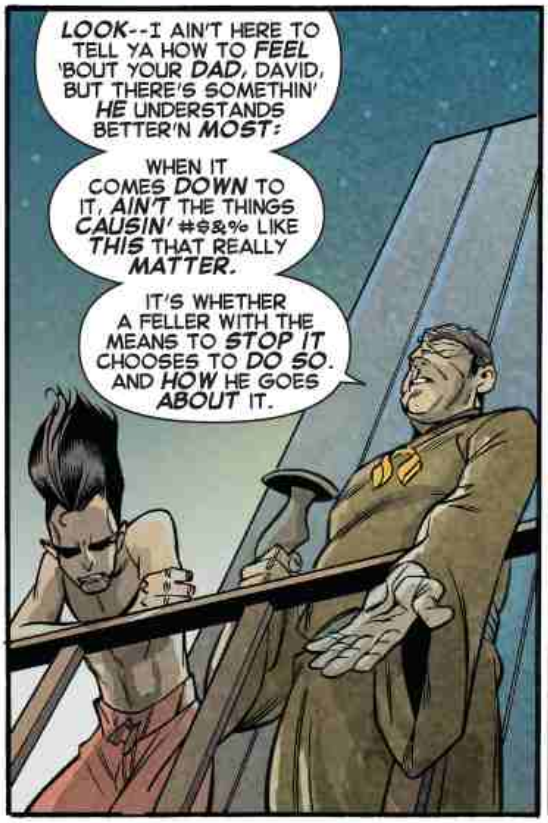
AND THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE.


Y'OKAY, KID?
...
... FINE. JUST LOST MY CONCENTRATION FOR A SECOND.
UH-HUH. AND THE MINDSCAPE? THE BRAIN-JAIL WE BUILT...? IT STILL WORKIN' OUT?
AYE. AYE, IT'S PERFECT. L-LIKE BLOODY ALCATRAZ FOR THE PSYCHE. 'S ALL I CAN DO NOT TO MAKE A "GRAY CELLS" JOKE.
MENTAL METAPHOR, GURU. HELPS ME VISUALIZE THE SITUATION.
JUST...GOT TO CONCENTRATE.
DAVID...YOUR EGO'S INFESTED BY HUNDREDS'A PREDATORY DISSOCIATIVE PERSONALITIES. VISUALIZIN'S ONLY HALF THE BATTLE.
I KNOW THAT...BUT... FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS I'M KEEPIN' THEM LOCKED DOWN. USIN' THEIR POWERS WHEN I NEED.
NO. NO-- NOT THEIRS. MY POWERS.
I'VE NOT BEEN THIS CALM IN FOREVER, GURU.
I JUST... I-IF ONLY THERE WAS A GOAL. SOMETHING TO WORK TOWARDS. SOMETHING TO KEEP ME FOCUSED...
KID WANTS A PURPOSE.
YOUR LUCKY DAY, DAVID. EYES DOWN.
WHAT'S--
HATE.
THAT'S WHAT HATE LOOKS LIKE.

THEY'RE LOCALS, MOSTLY. FEW HOLY TYPES FROM THE MOUNTAIN.
LET'S ROLE-PLAY. SAY YOUR CROPS FAIL, YOUR OX DIES, YOUR KID GETS A BOIL ON HIS ASS-- WHATEVER. SAY NO ONE EVER TAUGHT YOU RANDOM #&!% SOMETIMES HAPPENS.
BUT THEN--OH, HEY-- THERE'S A CREW OF WEIRDO WIZARDS LIVIN' IN A COMMUNE RIGHT HERE IN THE HILLS. MIGHTY SUSPICIOUS, THAT.

THEY BLAME US...?
THEY'RE HUMAN. THEY'LL BLAME WHATEVER HURTS 'EM ON WHOEVER THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU KNOW THAT.
IT'S WHAT YOUR PA'S BEEN FIGHTIN' HIS WHOLE LIFE.

SPEAKIN' OF:
COULDN'T HELP NOTICIN' YOUR MOST RECENT, AH...LAPSE IN CONCENTRATION... KINDA COINCIDED WITH US DISCUSSIN' THE GUY.
THE SHADOW OF GREATNESS LOOMS LARGE, HUH?


LOOK--I AIN'T HERE TO TELL YA HOW TO FEEL 'BOUT YOUR DAD, DAVID, BUT THERE'S SOMETHIN' HE UNDERSTANDS BETTER'N MOST:
WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, AIN'T THE THINGS CAUSIN' #$&% LIKE THIS THAT REALLY MATTER.
IT'S WHETHER A FELLER WITH THE MEANS TO STOP IT CHOOSES TO DO SO. AND HOW HE GOES ABOUT IT.

...

I'LL NEED YOUR HELP.
AND THAT RIGHT THERE IS A DAMN GOOD START.

LISTEN.
LISTEN WITHOUT SOUND. I'M THE LIGHTNING IN YOUR SPINE. YOU WILL HEAR ME. YOU WILL UNDERSTAND ME.
THERE ARE TWO WAYS THIS CAN END.
THE FIRST: EMBRACE US. WELCOME US WITHOUT FEAR.
FORGIVE OUR STRANGENESS AND GREET US AS EQUALS.
AR
YOU'LL FIND WE CAN BE VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR FRIENDS.
UHN!
GLUP
GLHLUP
BLORT
STAY!
#&%&#$!
DOWN!

THE SECOND WAY:
HATE US.
WALLOW IN YOUR IGNORANCE. PERSECUTE US. FEAR US.
YOU'LL FIND WE CAN PROVIDE PLENTIFUL GROUNDS FOR YOUR TERROR, IF PROVOKED.
DECIDE, PLEASE.
...
...
GO HOME.
REALLY. JUST...JUST GO HOME.

NICE WORK.
THEY WANTED TO WORSHIP ME. WOULD'VE DONE WHATEVER I SAID.
THERE'S ALWAYS A THIRD WAY, KID. TRICK IS NOT TAKIN' IT.
TH-THANK YOU, GURU. FOR THE HELP.
AIN'T NOTHIN'. SOMEDAY WE'LL GET YOU DOIN' IT ALL SOLO.
...SAY, DAVID?
WHAT, UH... WHAT D'YOU S'POSE YOU WOULDA DONE, THEY'D GONE FOR OPTION #2...?
HBLOORK

THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL FOR HIGHER LEARNING. WESTCHESTER, NY.
AAAAAAAAAA
AAAAA
AAAAA
AAAAA
SORRY
SORRY
GET HELP! GET HELP!
BLINDFOLD.
EMPATH, TELESEER, PRECOGNITICIAN. HUMAN EARLY-WARNING SYSTEM.
RUTH-- WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?
KITTY PRYDE.
ATOMIC DISTORTIONIST. HEADMISTRESS.
S... SOMEONE...
OHGOD. SORRY. YES. YES.
SOMEONE JUST CHANGED THE FUTURE.
SH-SHE'S CRYING.
WHERE FROM? SHE'S GOT NO EYES.
THE OLD KING IS DEAD.
LONG LIVE THE NEW KING.
AR

SHE TASTED IT. FOR JUST A SECOND, KSENIA NADEJDA PANOV TASTED FREEDOM, AND AS SHE SEETHES BACK IN HER CELL SHE VOWS IT WILL NOT BE THE LAST TI--

G-GURU?
GURU, TRY NOT TO MOVE.
UUUUHHH...
THE PROTESTERS...? TH...THEY CAME BACK...THAT'S GOTTA BE IT.
N-NO, IT... THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT...I DIDN'T MEAN FOR... I...I CAN'T FIX Y...
DAVID? IS THAT YOU? I CAN'T FEEL MY LEGS, DAVID.
GURU...MY FATHER.
HE DIED. I FELT IT HAPPEN. SOMETHING CHANGED IN MY BRAIN.
I'M-I'M SCARED, GURU.
AH.
POOR CHARLES. POOR DAVID.
YOU'RE A... A GOOD KID. YOU TRY AN' BELIEVE THAT NOW, Y'HEAR?
A-AND HEY--YER DAD'S PEOPLE...THEM X-MEN? THEY'LL COME COLLECT YA REAL SOON. THEY LOOK AFTER THEIR OWN.
M...MEET 'EM AS A... A FRIEND, DAVID.
ALWAYS... A-ALW... A FR...
*

THEY...
THEY MIGHT NOT BE ALL THAT INCLINED TO FRIENDSHIP, GURU.
THEY'RE A WEE BIT PICKY LIKE THAT.

SILENCE IN THE MIND-JAIL. SILENCE FOR A MOMENT... BEFORE THE WHISPERING BEGINS.
EVERYTHING'S CHANGED. THE PRISONERS ARE BROKEN--DRAINED ALL AT ONCE--AND YET... AND YET...
TH...THE DOORS, A-ALL GONE.
THEY ARE NOT BEATEN.
THE HAZEGUARD'S DEAD...KSENIA--LOOK.
THE XTRACTOR'S UNGUARDED!
...
HE'S MINE! I'LL KILL ANY OF YOU GETS IN MY W--
HKKKK
BUT NONE OF THE OTHERS HEAR THE ABORTED THREAT--NOT AMIDST THE RUSH.
AND SO NONE NOTICES THE NEWBORN THING SQUATTING RATLIKE ON THE DEAD CHEST OF KSENIA NADEJDA PANOV, SLURPING GREEDILY AT HER FLESH.
TO ME.
TO ME.
SKLP OMK
AFTER ALL, WHAT'S ONE MORE FIEND AMIDST A LEGION?
THIS, THEN, IS THE QORTEX COMPLEX.
A PLACE WHERE THE VILE AND THE VICIOUS SLITHER FORTH FROM SHATTERED BRAINCELLS, WITH THE SAME SNEER ON EVERY LIP. THEIR JAILER IS ALONE. OUTNUMBERED. UNPROTECTED.
EASY PREY.
AR